


AN
ABRIDGEMENT
OF
SACRED HISTORY;
BY
DAVID COLLIE.



MALACCA.

PRINTED AT THE MISSION PRESS.

1826.

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1810.

I

TO THE

STUDENTS

IN THE

ANGLO-CHINESE COLLEGE.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

I have spent many happy evenings in explaining to you the great doctrines of that sacred Book, of which this small tract is but a brief outline. I trust you are convinced, from the knowledge which you have acquired of the grand, and infinitely important discoveries of the Bible, that it is unspeakably

more worthy of your closest attention, than any other book the world has ever seen. This Sacred Volume, my dear friends, is the only sure and infallible Chart, which can direct fallen man across the troubled sea of life, and at last, land him in peace and safety on the shores of eternal rest. Happy! infinitely happy is the man who directs his course by this Chart! Miserable! eternally miserable is he who despises and neglects it! Take it, my young friends, for the guide of your youth, and it will become the consolation of your old age.

I now present you with this little book, which I wish you to keep and frequently consult, that it may assist you in calling back to your recollection, many of the most interesting

and important facts, of which we have often conversed together. Frequently read the parts of Scripture referred to, and pray that the important truths there recorded may be written on your hearts by the finger of the Holy Spirit.

Finally, my dear pupils, that you and I may now imitate the faith and holiness of the saints, whose history the Bible records, and at last dwell with them forever in the mansions of endless felicity, is the fervent prayer of

Your affectionate Tutor,

and

Sincere Friend,

DAVID COLLIE.

PREFACE.

THE following Tract was written with the sole intention of assisting the Chinese youths who are educated in the Anglo-Chinese College, in recalling to their minds some of the most important facts, with which they are made acquainted by a regular perusal of the inspired records. This being the design of the pamphlet, it was deemed superfluous to enter into a minute detail of particular circumstances. The student who has read the Bible for himself,

and who has been well instructed in its contents, only wants a hint respecting leading facts, in order to call to his recollection a train of more minute circumstances with which these facts are connected. On this principle the compiler has for the benefit of his pupils, drawn up the following pages, in which leading facts, only, have been hinted at.

The advantages which may, and must result from making the heathen mind, while yet young and tender, intimately acquainted with the divine dispensations, as they are recorded by the pen of inspiration, are incalculable, and will repay the most laborious exertions ten thousand fold. Immediate conversion may not ensue, but in proportion

as correct views of revealed truth, in all its beauty and grandeur, gain ground, especially among the rising generation, in the same proportion is the foundation of heathenism undermined. And when once the foundation gives way, the whole fabric must fall to the ground. Let the friends of divine truth diffuse it by every method and means in their power:—let them not faint, nor grow weary, till that glorious day arrive when “the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.”

D. C.

Malacca,
July 6th, 1826. }

EPITOME &c.

CHAP. I.

From the creation to the flood including a period of 1556 years.

The world was created about four thousand years before the birth of Jesus Christ. All things were created by God in six days. Man was created on the sixth day. God created one man and from his left side took a rib of which he formed a woman, whom he gave to the man as his companion and helper. The man was called Adam and the woman Eve. When God created these two persons he gave them a per-

fectly holy nature, and blessed them with genuine happiness. Hence they were said to be created in the image of God, which consists in knowledge, holiness and happiness. Gen. Chap. 1 29. 27. Ephes. ix 24. Adam and Eve were placed over all the other creatures which God had created; and were enjoined to be fruitful, i. e. have many children, in order that the whole world might be inhabited by human beings. This happy pair were the parents of the whole human race. They were placed by their Creator in a most delightful garden, and permitted to eat the fruit of every tree in the garden, with the exception of one tree, called the tree of knowledge. But of the fruit of this one tree, God commanded them not to eat, saying, 'in the day you eat of it you shall

die', or become wicked and unhappy. They however disobeyed God, listened to the temptations of the Devil, and eat the forbidden fruit. On this account they defiled their original nature; lost their happiness, and involved all their posterity in their sin. Gen. Chap. iii. Rom. Chap. x. ver. 12. to the end of the Chapter.

Cain, Adam's first son, was a bad man and envied his virtuous brother Abel, because God accepted Abel's offering and rejected Cain's. Cain, wishing to kill his brother, asked him to go with him to the fields where he committed the heinous crime of murdering his own brother. Thus the first man who was born of a woman was a murderer. God was exceedingly angry with Cain for having murdered Abel, whose blood

cried for vengeance on his brother's head. On account of this wicked action God set a mark upon Cain that every person might know him, and he wandered about from place to place a poor miserable vagabond, Gen. Chap. iv.

Enoch, an eminently holy man, was translated to heaven, body and soul, without having died. Gen. Chap. v.

About 1556 years after the creation of the world, all the inhabitants of the earth became so extremely wicked, that God brought a flood of water which drowned the whole human race, except the righteous man Noah and his family, consisting of his wife, his three sons and their wives. All the animals were likewise drowned, except a few of each kind. Noah, his family, seven of each kind of clean animals, and two of each

kind of unclean animals were saved by means of an Ark or great ship, which God commanded Noah to prepare and which he was more than 100 years in building. The flood remained one year on the earth before all the water was dried up. Gen. Chap. VI. VII. VIII.

After the waters of the deluge had left the earth, God made a promise to Noah, that he would never again destroy men by a flood, and informed him that the rainbow which we see in the cloud, should be a proof to men of all ages, that God would keep this promise. From the three sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the whole world was peopled after the flood. Gen. IX. X.

CHAP. II.

From the flood to the death of Abraham.

Upwards of 100 years after the flood, men wished to build a tower the top of which might reach to heaven, in order to hand down their names to future ages. They commenced the building of their intended tower, but God being provoked by their wickedness, confounded their language, so that they could not possibly understand each other. Thus they were obliged to relinquish their foolish undertaking. Afterwards, they all spoke different languages, and gradually spread abroad over the face

of the earth. This circumstance seems to have given rise to the numerous languages now spoken in the different countries of the world. Gen. Chap. xi.

Almighty God manifested himself to Abraham, called him from his own country, promised him a numerous progeny and revealed to him that Jesus the Saviour of the world, according to his human nature, should proceed from him. He likewise promised his posterity the rich and beautiful land of Canaan as their inheritance. Gen. Chap. xii. xiii. xv. xvii.

God having revealed to Abraham that he would utterly destroy the abandoned cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham prayed with great importunity that they might be spared. God listened to the fervent prayers of this eminently holy man, and declared that if in these

two cities there were found ten righteous persons, he would for their sakes have mercy on the wicked inhabitants. But amongst the whole inhabitants of these two cities, there were not ten righteous persons: therefore God destroyed them by raining fire from heaven which burnt all the inhabitants to ashes: only the good man Lot, a nephew of Abraham, with his wife and two daughters escaped. Gen. Chap. xviii. xix.

When Abraham was one hundred years old, and his wife Sarah was long past the age when women cease to bear children, his son Isaac was born in a supernatural manner, according to the divine promise. God, in order to try the faith of Abraham, and to make him a pattern of faith and obedience to all future ages, commanded him to kill his beloved son

Isaac, and offer him up as a sacrifice to God. Abraham instantly obeyed the divine command, and was on the very point of taking away the life of his son, when God sent an Angel to prevent him; because he had now proved that his faith and obedience were sincere. Gen. xxii.

Abraham, after having seen his darling son Isaac married according to his mind, and having exhibited a bright pattern of faith and obedience to the divine will, died at the age of one hundred and seventy five years. This was a great age, but not to be compared with the length of men's lives before the flood, some of whom lived upwards of eight or nine hundred years. Gen. Chap. v.

CHAP. III.

From the death of Abraham to the departure of Israel from Egypt.

Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau. Jacob was a good man, and had twelve sons who were the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, amongst which the tribes of Levi and Judah were the most noted: the former being set apart to the Priesthood, and the latter being, for a long time, that from which their kings were chosen.

Joseph, eleventh son of Jacob, was a young man of eminent virtue, but on account of his father's partiality towards

him, and from some dreams which he had, indicative of his future superiority, his brethren hated him, and having found a convenient opportunity sold him as a slave. He was carried into Egypt where he suffered many hardships. His conduct however was so eminently exemplary that he was at last taken notice of by the king of Egypt, and raised to the dignity of first minister of state. Such were his talents and wisdom, and so eminently did God assist him, that he saved the nation from destruction during seven years of famine.

His brethren, who were living with their father in Canaan, being in want of food and hearing that there was plenty of corn in Egypt, went thither to buy, not knowing that Joseph was there, far less that he was prime

minister. Joseph at first sight knew his brethren, but they did not recognize him. He used them harshly at first, but after they had come a second time to buy corn, he made himself known to them, and sent for his father with all his family. The king gave them liberty to dwell in the beautiful land of Goshen. Thus Joseph's dreams were accomplished.—See the last 15 Chapters of Genesis.

The family of Jacob lived in Egypt four hundred years. But after the death of Joseph, the Kings of that country treated them in a tyrannical manner, and lest they should become too powerful and revenge themselves on their oppressors, orders were issued by government to the Egyptian midwives who attended the Jewish, or Hebrew women,

in child birth; to put to death all the male children the moment they were born. Moses, who afterwards was employed by God to deliver his countrymen from the tyranny of the Egyptians, when born was concealed by his parents for the space of three months. When they could conceal him no longer, they made a little bark for him, and put him on the river where he was noticed by the king's daughter, who adopted him as her son. Thus he was educated and brought up in the court of Pharaoh king of Egypt. But when he grew up to manhood, he preferred suffering with his countrymen, to the enjoyment of the sinful pleasures of Pharaoh's court. After he had left the court and was employed in the humble occupation of a shepherd, God appeared to

him in a burning bush, and commanded him, in conjunction with his brother Aaron, to inform the king of Egypt that God had determined to remove his chosen people, the posterity of Abraham from Egypt, and therefore he ought to give them liberty to leave his kingdom. Pharaoh unwilling to obey the divine command, repeatedly promised to let the people of Israel go, and as often violated his promises. To punish Pharaoh and his people for their cruelty to the Jews and disobedience to the divine will, God caused Moses to bring several heavy calamities upon the nation. At last Pharaoh terrified by these calamities, permitted the people of Israel to leave Egypt. They had no sooner departed however, than he pursued after them with a great army.

The Jews had to cross the red sea on their way to their native country. This sea God by a stupendous miracle divided in two, so that the people crossed on dry land. Pharaoh having followed them into the sea, God caused the waves to return upon him and his mighty army ; so that the king and all his followers were drowned : not one escaped. *Exod. 1—xv. Chap.*

CHAP. IV.

From the time Israel left Egypt to the building of Solomon's Temple.

Although, God mercifully delivered the Jews from Egyptian slavery, yet they often murmured and sinned against

him, on which account he caused them to wander forty years in the wilderness ; so that of all who left Egypt only two persons entered Canaan, all the rest having died in the wilderness before they reached the promised land. Those who entered Canaan, were all, except two, born in the wilderness. When they complained for want of food God rained down manna from heaven every morning, except on Sabbath. He also gave them water from the rock. Their garments did not grow old, nor did their shoes wear out :—" with God nothing is impossible." *Exod. Chap. xvi.*

Fifty days after the people of Israel left Egypt, Almighty God appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai in the midst of thunderings and lightnings, and delivered to him the moral law, or ten

commandments written on two tables of stone. *Exod. xx.*

After the moral law, which was to be an immutable rule of rectitude to men of all ages and of every country under heaven, had been delivered with the most awful solemnity, the Supreme Ruler as the temporal, as well as spiritual sovereign of the Jews, delivered to that people various laws, many of which were binding on them only, and had no reference to other nations. *Exod. xxi. xxii. xxiii.*

In the latter part of the Book of Exodus, and in the Book of Leviticus, we have a very minute account of a vast number of rites, which were instituted by divine authority, principally with a view to point the Jews, by symbols, to Jesus who was to descend into the

world, in order to atone for human guilt.

All these laws were delivered while the people of Israel were travelling from Egypt on their way to Canaan, and Moses their leader was commanded by God to see them enforced.

Moses having served God faithfully, and proved himself a true patriot, and being called by God to the top of mount Pisgah, where he had a distant glimpse of the land of Canaan, died in the country of Moab, and was buried there by God, so that no man ever knew where his grave was. Deut. Chap. xxxiv.

Joshua, who had been the minister of Moses, succeeded him after his death and led the people of Israel into Canaan. They crossed the river Jordan, in the same miraculous manner as they had passed over the Red sea. The inhabitants

of Canaan being extremely wicked, God commanded Joshua to extirpate them and divide their country among the Jews. Some of the Canaanites, however, were left to try the obedience of the Jews.—See the Book of Joshua.

After the death of Joshua, the Israelites became exceedingly wicked, rebelled against God and followed the evil customs of the nations around them. As a punishment for their sins, God frequently permitted their enemies, to attack them and take them captive. When they repented and prayed to God, he raised up men of talents and virtue to rule them, and to be instrumental in delivering them from their enemies. These men were called Judges, and the Book of Judges contains an account of their exploits.

At last the Jews became dissatisfied with their rulers and begged that Samuel the Prophet, whose sons were rulers at the time, would appoint some person to be their king, that they might be like the surrounding nations. Samuel was displeased at this request, but when he had prayed to God, God commanded him to gratify their wishes. But as God was their king, he granted them this request in anger;—not in love; as a punishment;—not as a blessing. 1 Samuel Chap. viii.

Saul being appointed king of Israel, reigned well for some time, but having afterwards disobeyed the divine will, God withdrew his gracious protection from him, till at last he was slain in battle with the Philistines. 2 Samuel Chap. xxvi.

David, who was originally a shepherd, but who had frequently distinguished himself by his bravery, especially in killing the giant of Gath, was chosen by God to succeed Saul in the government of his country. 2 Samuel Chap.

II.

David was a man of eminent talents and virtue; but guilty of some great sins, of which he deeply repented. He had much trouble in his own family, especially from the conduct of his son Absalom who excited the people to rebellion, and attempted to take the throne from his father. He was at last defeated and slain by Joab, commander of David's army. 2 Samuel Chap. XV. XVI. XVII. XVIII.

After the death of David, he was succeeded by his son Solomon, who is

styled the wisest of men. In the former part of his reign, he manifested extraordinary talents and piety, but afterwards his heart became corrupted by his intercourse with seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines. 1 Kings Chap. xi.

He built a most splendid Temple at Jerusalem, for the purpose of conducting the public worship of the true God. This House was seven years in building, and was ornamented in the highest style of magnificence. At its dedication, Solomon offered in sacrifice twenty thousand oxen, and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. 1 Kings Chap. v—xi.

CHAP. V.

From the building of Solomon's Temple to the captivity of the Jews in Babylon.

After the death of Solomon, Rehoboam his son ascended the throne, and ten of the twelve tribes revolted; only the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin submitted to his sway. The other ten tribes followed Jeroboam as their Prince, and he rebelled against the true God and set up false gods, which he and his people worshipped.

Thus the descendants of Abraham were divided into two nations. The ten tribes which revolted under Jeroboam, were called the kingdom of Israel, and

the two tribes which continued faithful to Rehoboam, were called the kingdom of Judah.

The kingdom of Israel was governed by a succession of idolatrous Princes, and existed about two hundred and fifty years.

God sent several eminently holy men who were called Prophets, because they foreknew future events, to reprove the kings and people of Israel, and exhort them to forsake their false Gods and return to the worship and service of the true God. One of the most eminent of these Prophets was Elijah, who prophesied in the time of Ahab, one of the worst of the kings of Israel. In the XVIII Chap. of 1 Kings, there is a striking account of the manner in which Elijah put all the prophets of the false god

Baal to shame. I beg my readers to consult the passage for themselves. This holy man was taken to heaven in a chariot of fire, without having died.—2 Kings Chap. II. At last, the kingdom of Israel, on account of idolatry and other sins, was destroyed; and Samaria the capital, was taken in the time of Hoshea, by the king of Assyria, who carried away the ten tribes into his own kingdom, from whence they were dispersed into various countries, and have never again returned to settle in their native country.

The kingdom of Judah, although sometimes governed by bad kings, was favored with some Monarchs of eminent virtue and piety, such as Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah and others. Jerusa-

lem was the Metropolis. In this famous city the true God was worshipped in Solomon's Temple, but the worship of false gods likewise found its way into this kingdom, and God sent several holy Prophets to reprove the sins of the people and to foretel the coming of Jesus the Saviour of the world. Isaiah commonly called "the evangelical prophet" because he uttered a greater number of explicit predictions respecting Jesus than any of the other Prophets, was one of the most eminent of the Seers of Judah. Jeremiah who underwent many severe hardships, and Daniel who was miraculously preserved alive in the lions den, were also eminent men and bright patterns of faith, holiness and fortitude. There is no bravery equal to the fear of God. Read the

book of Daniel, there you may learn true heroism.

But although the kingdom of Judah was highly favored with many excellent Princes and holy Prophets, they continued to rebel against God, till at last provoked by their ingratitude and disobedience, the God of their fathers gave them over to their enemies. For in the time of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon besieged Jerusalem, burnt the temple and carried the inhabitants captive into Babylon, about 420 years after Solomon built the temple of Jerusalem, 130 years after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, and 580 years before the birth of Christ.

CHAP. VII.

From the captivity to the birth of Christ.

The Jews were kept captives in Babylon seventy years, according to the predictions of Jeremiah.—See Jeremiah Chap. xxv, from the beginning to the 15 ver. At the expiration of these 70 years God disposed the heart of Cyrus, king of Persia, to permit them to return to their native land and rebuild their temple at Jerusalem. They accordingly returned under the direction of Zerubbabel and commenced the rebuilding of the temple and city. But after the death of Cyrus, during the reign of Artaxerxes, their enemies belonging to

the neighbouring nations, succeeded in persuading that Prince to put a stop to the work. When Darius king of Persia came to the throne, he found that Cyrus had made a decree that the Jews should be allowed to build their temple, and accordingly issued an order that they should be permitted to proceed with the work, and commanded his subjects to supply them with every thing necessary to the accomplishment of their design, threatening to inflict the severest punishments upon all who did not thus assist them. Hence the temple after a long delay ; was at last rebuilt, but it was by no means equal to the former House in splendour and magnificence. The Prophets Haggai and Zechariah lived at that time, and strongly exhorted the people to persevere in rearing the

the temple. Some years after the temple was finished, Nehemiah returned from Babylon, and caused them to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem ; and restored order and good government to the State.

From the rebuilding of Jerusalem, to the destruction of that city, which took place about 40 years after the death of Christ, there was, according to the prediction of the Prophet Daniel, a space of 490 years.—See Daniel Chap. ix.

For some time after the Jews returned from their captivity in Babylon, they were under the kings of Persia, and afterwards were subject to the kings of Syria. During this period, they suffered much from the neighbouring nations :—at last they were subdued by

the Romans, who made Herod king over Judea. He was king of the Jews when Jesus appeared in our world.

From the time of Samuel, who lived 1163 years before Christ, to that of Malachi who prophesied about 937 years before the birth of Christ, there was an almost continued succession of Prophets in Judea, who being inspired of God, foretold future events, and exhorted the Jews to practice their duty, towards God and man.

Some of these holy men explicitly predicted the birth, miracles, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus the Saviour of the world.

The last of these predictions were uttered 397 years before the advent of the Saviour, yet they all received the most exact and complete fulfilment in

his person and work. Could any thing afford a stronger proof that he really was sent from God to be the Saviour of men!

CHAP. VIII.

Of the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

About 4004 years after the creation of the world, and 397 years after the last prophecy respecting him had been delivered, Jesus the Saviour of men appeared in Judea, a country in the west of Asia. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of a virgin, a descendant of the House

of David, the famous monarch of Israel; so that he had no earthly father. His birth was announced by Angels, and excited such jealousy in the mind of Herod, king of Judea, that he caused all the children in Bethlehem, who were under two years of age, to be put to death, hoping that Jesus who was born in that town, would by this means be cut off. But his mother and her husband being warned by God in a dream, fled with the child into Egypt, where they remained till Herod died, and afterwards returned to Judea.

Jesus lived an obscure life, till he was about thirty years of age, at which time he was publicly baptized by John the Baptist. At his baptism the heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God descended upon him in the form of a

dove, while a voice was heard, saying
 “this is my beloved Son, in whom I am
 well pleased, hear ye him.” Matthew
 Chap. i. ii. iii. Luke Chap. i. ii. iii.

During the last three years that
 Jesus dwelt upon the earth, he was
 constantly employed in teaching the
 principles of divine truth, healing the
 sick and performing miracles in proof
 of his divine mission. Many of the
 learned, self-wise and self-righteous
 men of the age, endeavoured to dispute
 with him, and to find some cause of
 accusation proceed from his own mouth;
 but with infinite wisdom, and most
 astonishing readiness, he replied to
 all their inquiries, and silenced all their
 cavils. His most bitter enemies could
 find no fault in his conduct. “He was
 holy, harmless, undefiled and separate

from sinners." Supreme love to God, and infinite kindness to man, shone forth in all that he said and did. 'Never man spake as he spake,' said those who listened to his instructions.

After having thus lived to promote the happiness of men about the space of 33 years, he willingly delivered himself up to the Jews (who ardently wished for his death) and according to the predetermination of God, died a most painful death in order to atone for the sins of all who truly believe in him. At his death the sun was darkened and refused to give his light,—the rocks rent,—the earth quaked,—the veil of the temple at Jerusalem, was rent from the top to the bottom, and many holy men rose from their graves. Matthew Chap. xxvii.

Having lain in the grave a part of three days, he rose again as he had predicted. After his resurrection, he appeared frequently to his disciples, and on one occasion, shewed himself to upwards of 500 persons. 1 Cor. Chap. xv—6.

Jesus remained on the earth forty days after his resurrection. During which time, he instructed his Apostles respecting the work of publishing his doctrines to the world. At the end of forty days, he ascended again to heaven, in the presence of his disciples, and is now employed in interceding for his people. Acts Chap. 1.

Ten days after Jesus ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit descended upon the twelve Apostles, and gave them an infallible knowledge of the

will of God; and at the same time communicated to them the miraculous power of speaking many languages which they had never studied. Acts Chap. II.

The preaching of the Apostles, was attended with extraordinary success. Three thousand were converted at one sermon, and the doctrines of Jesus spread rapidly through Judea, and in the surrounding countries. Paul, who had formerly persecuted the followers of Jesus, was converted in a miraculous manner, and afterwards became a most zealous preacher of the Gospel. He visited Rome, and travelled in Greece, Spain and other countries, boldly encountering every danger for the the glory of God and the good of man. Through his preaching, vast multitudes embraced the Gospel,

and became holy and upright in their conduct. See the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of Paul.

The Apostles and Evangelists instituted Christian Churches in many countries, and placed over them wise and holy men, who preached the Gospel and administered the ordinances of religion to believers, and likewise proclaimed the joyful sound to others who had not yet believed.

Since the time of the Apostles, a period of nearly 1800 years, the Gospel has been gradually spreading among the nations of the world ; and according to many prophecies, recorded in the Bible, will continue to spread, until all nations embrace its doctrines, lay aside their idols, and become the sincere worshippers of the one living and

true God. See the LXXII. Psalm, Isaiah XI. and many other places.

CONCLUSION

From the above brief sketch, it may be seen that the Bible contains the history of the world for the space of more than four thousand years: and if you carefully examine the last book of Scripture, you will find that it contains a prophetic history of the world, from the time of Christ to the end of the world, so that we may affirm that in the Bible are contained the great outlines of this world's history, from its creation to its final destruction. And when we

consider that this book was published by divine authority, and records the wonderful dispensations of the Supreme Ruler towards mankind, ought we not to esteem it the most valuable book in the world, and to make ourselves intimately acquainted with its contents? He who knows, believes, feels, and practices the doctrines of the Bible, is an heir of eternal felicity! He who is ignorant of these doctrines, or who, although he knows, neglects them, is the child of eternal woe!

F I N I S.